



Thomas McKellar & Sons
family funeral directors since 1870

Serving our local
community for
over 140 years



*Ayrshire's longest established family-run funeral director
serving families in our community for over 140 years*

Stewarton

2 Main Street
Stewarton
KA3 5AE

Kilmarnock

96 Titchfield Street
Kilmarnock
KA1 1PH

Galston

8 Polwarth Street
Galston
KA4 8HG

Talk to us today about our Independent
Way Plus Funeral Plans provided by

Golden Charter 
Funeral Plans

Kilmarnock: 01563 572565

Stewarton: 01560 485366

Galston: 01563 624025

Email: info@thomasmckellar.co.uk

Website: www.thomasmckellar.co.uk





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of commerce and industry



Our History

The firm of Thomas McKellar & Sons was established in 1870 when the present owner's great-grandfather migrated from Mull to the small Ayrshire village of Moscow. Duncan McKellar set up his carpentry and undertakers business there for a few years before moving to the historic covenanting village of Fenwick. He married Catherine Parker, a farmer's daughter from Galston, and one of their sons became a blacksmith in Kirkoswald. Another son, Thomas, joined his father in the business and married Annie Watt Cameron of Langside Farm, Fenwick.

They had three sons, Duncan, William and Thomas, who expanded the trade of joiners, building contractors, motor body builders and funeral undertakers in the areas of Fenwick, Stewarton, Dunlop, Kilmaurs and Kilmarnock. In 1993 the company changed to Funeral Directors only, and now has offices in Stewarton, Kilmarnock and Galston.

Duncan McKellar married Jean Craig Picken, from Dunlop, in 1951. The business is managed today by their son, Tom, the fourth generation of the family, who has two children, Louise and Cameron. Tom is a member of Kilmarnock Rotary Club and his main interest is music; formerly singing with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Chorus for many years, and organist and choirmaster at Holy Trinity Church, Kilmarnock. Louise joined the family business full-time in 2012, after studying Psychology and Sociology, working with Citizens Advice Scotland and running an audio-visual company with her brother. Cameron is a qualified Sound Engineer, working most recently with Disney. He has worked part-time in the family business since he was 16 and returned from working abroad to become full-time with the company in 2017.

The aim of this entirely independent family funeral directors is to provide the local community with a service they require at a difficult and vulnerable time in their lives, offered with professionalism, compassion and dignity.

"Everything was handled so sensitively and professionally. As you can imagine, this was a very difficult time for me, but your friendly and caring approach made things so much easier."

Our family taking care of your family

Arranging a funeral for a family member is one of the most emotionally challenging times in our lives. Even if the death is expected, nothing can prepare you for losing someone close. As your family funeral directors, we are here to help and advise in whatever way we can, whenever you need us, to help you through this difficult time and ensure that your loved one's funeral is a fitting tribute to the life they have lived.

We hope that the information in this brochure will allow you to reflect upon your initial meeting with the funeral director and may help to answer any queries you have regarding the funeral arrangements. We understand that it can be difficult to make some decisions straight away and feel it is important for families to have time for discussion and the opportunity to reflect. Should you have any questions prior to the funeral or if you would like to make changes to the arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Arranging the Funeral

Our services to you start when you contact us and often extend way beyond the day of the funeral. On first contact we will ask for your details and details of the deceased and then arrange to meet you to discuss the funeral arrangements and take the deceased into our care. An appointment can be made for the family to visit our chapel of rest and pay their last respects before the day of the funeral, should they wish to do so.

During the initial appointment, the funeral director will advise on the costs of the funeral and provide a quotation. The funeral account will be divided into two separate parts - the funeral director's charges and the disbursements paid on your behalf. Our charges will include all professional services involved in making the funeral arrangements, caring for the deceased, the provision of a coffin and all vehicles and staff involved in conducting the funeral.

The disbursements are third party charges such as crematorium or burial fees, church fees, celebrant's fees, obituary notices, flowers and order of service sheets. We will provide an estimate of the approximate cost, but we have no direct control over these charges and they could therefore be subject to slight variations.

Cremations

There are two crematoriums in Ayrshire - Holmsford Bridge Crematorium by Dregghorn, and Masonhill Crematorium by Ayr. There are strict regulations for cremation and the funeral director will ask whether the deceased has a pacemaker, which we will attend to at no extra cost, and will be able to advise on the suitability for cremation of any items of clothing or tributes that the family wish to have placed in the coffin.

The ashes can be scattered in the crematorium gardens of remembrance or at a place of your choice, or you may choose to have them interred in a cemetery. Alternatively, you may want to keep the

ashes in an urn or incorporate some of the ashes into jewellery or glassware. We can advise on these options and although it can be a difficult decision to make, in our experience, it is often better to make the choice sooner rather than later to help with the closure after a bereavement. It also helps many people to have a place to visit and remember their loved one in the time after the funeral.

Burials

If the deceased already has a burial plot, there should be a Lair Certificate which the funeral director will require. However, if the Lair Certificate cannot be found, it would be useful to know the last time the lair was opened and the name of the lair owner, so that the details can be traced by the cemetery department. If there is no existing lair, an application can be made for a new lair during the initial appointment with the funeral director.

It is traditional in Scotland to have eight cords attached to the coffin, which are taken by family members and close friends to assist with the lowering of the coffin into the grave. The first cord is taken by the chief mourner, usually the next-of-kin or closest family member, and the funeral director will call forward the other seven gentlemen or ladies in numerical order and give them the necessary instructions.

The Funeral Service

The funeral service can either be conducted by the parish clergy or by a funeral celebrant. We will usually make the first contact with them and arrange for them to meet you to discuss the eulogy and all other aspects of the service. Alternatively, you may choose to have a family member or close friend conduct the service and we will be able to offer advice to help them prepare for the service. There is a fee for a funeral celebrant and there would usually be costs for the church organist and church officer, which would be added to the funeral account. Although there is no fee for members of the clergy,

most families would give a donation to the minister or priest in a card of thanks on the day of the funeral.

If you would like a church service before the committal at the cemetery or crematorium, it is customary for the coffin to be taken into the church before the arrival of the mourners. The family would then arrive just before the service is due to start and would be guided to their reserved seats. Our Kilmarnock and Stewarton premises can be used for smaller funeral services, prior to the committal at the cemetery. Our Kilmarnock service room can seat up to 40 people and our Stewarton service room can seat up to 20 people.

"The service provided can only be described as first class and very professional which was noted by everyone in attendance at my father's funeral. Again thanks to all of you for everything you have done to help and support us."

Limousines

Our Mercedes-Benz fleet are chauffeur driven and we pride ourselves on keeping our vehicles extremely well maintained. Our cars are charged for as required and each limousine will comfortably carry up to seven passengers, while our saloon car is suitable for up to four passengers. We will collect the family for the funeral service, often following the hearse, and after the funeral we will take you to your desired destination for the funeral tea.

Flowers

Most families order at least one spray of flowers to be placed on top of the coffin. We can arrange this for you and will ask what colours or flowers you would like the florist to include. Other flower displays, such as wreaths or tribute names can also be ordered on your behalf.

Obituary Notices

We can arrange for obituary notices to appear in the local and national newspapers and the funeral director will offer to write this with you during the first appointment.

Music

Music often plays an important part in the service and even if you are not having hymns, you may want to choose suitable music for entry and retreat. For a non-religious funeral, you may also want to choose a piece of music for quiet reflection during the service.

Order of Service Sheets

Typically, the order of service would be printed for a religious service where hymns are being sung. However, families who have non-religious services are choosing to have an order of service printed with family photographs, poetry or song lyrics as a keepsake for those who attend the funeral service. We have an in-house print service and can design and print order of service sheets to meet your requirements.

Donations to Charity

Charitable donations have become a popular alternative to the giving of flowers, especially for cremations. We will collect the money after the service and hand it over to you on the day of the funeral or if you would prefer, we can keep it for you to collect the day after the funeral.

Funeral Tea

After the funeral service, the family would usually invite those who have attended to join them at a local hotel, restaurant or social club for refreshments. We can discuss local venues with you and book this on your behalf. However, they will need to be paid by you on the day of the funeral.

Memorial Masonry

We would recommend visiting Kay Park Memorials in Kilmarnock for all memorial masonry work. They can advise on the purchase of new headstones, memorial lettering and the restoration of existing headstones.

"We want to thank you for managing our mother's funeral arrangements. Your professionalism and knowledge, perfectly balanced by your sensitivity and caring attention to every detail made the experience so much easier to get through."

Registration of the death

Once you have collected the Medical Certificate of Death from the GP surgery or hospital, you will be required to register the death. There may be a delay in the Medical Certificate of Death being issued if the case has been referred to the Procurator Fiscal.

An appointment must be made to register the death by any person who is familiar with the details of the deceased. You will need to take the following documents to your appointment:

- Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (Form 11), issued by a doctor
- Birth Certificate of the deceased
- Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate of the deceased (if applicable)

Registration of a death is free of charge and you will be issued with an abbreviated extract of the death certificate. It will cost £10 each to order any full copies of the death certificate, which you may require for any insurance policies etc. The registrar can also cancel the passport and driving licence and can contact the DWP regarding any benefits or pensions. Please take all relevant paperwork with you to the appointment.

The registrar will give you the Certificate of Registration of Death (Form 14), which you should return to us, as this is required for the funeral to take place. If randomly selected the Form 14 and certificates may not be issued straight away due to the review process that is now in place to check the doctors paperwork. This process may take either 24-hours or up to 2-3 days to complete.

East Ayrshire Registration Services

Burns Monument Centre, Kay Park, Kilmarnock
Tel: 01563 576695

Help with Funeral Costs

The following information should be treated as guidance as we are not able to guarantee the availability of financial help, but we can advise on eligibility to make a claim.

If you are responsible for making the funeral arrangements and you or your partner are receiving a qualifying benefit, you may be able to make a claim for a Funeral Expenses Payment from the DWP. The Funeral Payment will not cover the total cost of the funeral, rather it is a contribution towards a simple funeral and includes provision for the following: a simple coffin; contribution towards the funeral director's fees; cemetery or crematorium fees; celebrant's fee. The Funeral Payment can be claimed up to three months after the date of the funeral, even

if you have already paid the funeral account. However, the amount of the Funeral Payment will be reduced by any available assets of the deceased, including money in bank or building society accounts, savings and investments, lump sum insurance payments, pension scheme payments, money paid out by pre-paid funeral plans, or contributions from relatives or charities.

If you are under state pension age and your spouse dies, you may be eligible for a one off, tax-free lump sum payment of £2000, known as the Bereavement Payment. Furthermore, if your spouse dies and you are aged between 45 and state pension age, you may be eligible to claim the Bereavement Allowance (previously known as the Widow's Pension). This would be paid for up to 52 weeks after the date of death. If you are bringing up children you would claim the Widowed Parent's Allowance instead.

Consult a Solicitor

In most circumstances, it is advisable for you to consult a solicitor, to take control of wills, problems of intestacy, outstanding debts, grants and letters of administration. The executor should gather together the deceased's paperwork and contact the solicitor as soon as possible to deal with the estate (the money, property and possessions left by the deceased). The solicitor can advise on the payment of debts and distribution of the estate to those entitled. The will should also be consulted for any instructions regarding the funeral arrangements.

When dealing with the financial affairs of the deceased you may be told to obtain 'confirmation' before any money or property can be released. The Sheriff Clerk of Court nearest to where the person died will issue a document called the Confirmation, which is necessary to release assets to the executor. A fee is chargeable depending on the size of the estate. A small estate is defined as money or property worth less than £36,000. You may not require the assistance of a solicitor when dealing with a small estate, as you will be able to make an appointment at the Sheriff Court for assistance with the paperwork. Confirmation is sometimes not needed if the amount of the estate is small or if the money can be released without the holder of the estate requiring a confirmation document.

Golden Charter 
Funeral Plans

Funeral Plans

Taking out a funeral plan protects against rising costs and gives you peace of mind that your family will be relieved of any financial worries at an already difficult time. We recommend Golden Charter Funeral Plans who are one of the UK's largest independent funeral plan providers, and can advise on the options available and assist with your application. Please contact us to request a brochure or find out more.

Terms of Business

We are a member of the National Association of Funeral Directors and subscribe to their current Code of Practice, a copy of which is available upon request. We aim to act in a professional manner and provide a courteous, sensitive and dignified service to you.

1. Agreement

Your continuing instructions will amount to acceptance of these terms of business.

2. Estimates

Our estimate is an indication of the charges likely to be incurred on the basis of the information and details we know at the date of the estimate. While we make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the estimate, the charges are liable to alteration, particularly where third parties change their rates or charges. We may not know the amount of the third party charges in advance of the funeral, however, we will give you a best estimate of such charges and the actual amount of the charges will be shown in the final account.

3. Payment

A deposit of £1,300.00 is due prior to the date of the funeral. The finalised account will be sent within a few days after the funeral and payment is due within 30 days of the account date, unless otherwise agreed by us in writing.

4. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

We respect the confidential nature of the information given to us and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), where you provide us with personal data, we will ensure the data will be held securely, in confidence and processed only for the purpose of carrying out our services. In order to provide our services we may need to pass such data to third parties, who are performing some of the services for you, so that they may contact you directly. For further information, please look at our privacy policy that can be found on our website.
www.thomasmckellar.co.uk/privacypolicy

5. Conduct

Our Code of Practice requires that we provide a high quality of service in all aspects. If, however, you have any questions or concerns about the service we provide to you, please raise them in the first instance with our designated senior person. If that does not resolve the problem to your satisfaction, then please contact the Funeral Arbitration Scheme, 618 Warwick Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 1AA, who provide an independent conciliation and arbitration through the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

6. Cancellation

You should understand that, should you choose to cancel the agreement having given your authority to commence work, you may be charged for services provided or disbursements incurred. Your instructions for cancellation must be received in writing.

Useful Contacts

Registrars

East Ayrshire 01563 576695
South Ayrshire 01292 617617
North Ayrshire 01294 310000

Flowers

Bizzie Lizzie's, Kilmaurs 01563 531939

Catering

The Fenwick Hotel, Fenwick 01560 600478
The Park Hotel, Kilmarnock 01563 545999

Piper

Bryce McCulloch 07974 838742

Help with Funeral Costs

Funeral Expenses Payment
Bereavement Service Helpline
0800 7310469

Memorial Masonry

Kay Park Memorials, Kilmarnock
01563 535800

Memorial Glassware

Ashes into Glass 01268 293000
www.ashesintoglass.co.uk

Bereavement Support

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland
0845 600 2227 www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

Child Bereavement UK 0800 0288840
www.childbereavement.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support 0808 8080000
www.macmillan.org.uk

The Bereavement Register
(Unwanted direct mail service)
0800 0822233
www.the-bereavement-register.org.uk



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